



31 October 2023, Tripoli, Libya – WHO and the Italian Embassy in Libya have signed a “One Health” (1) agreement on the prevention and control of arboviral and zoonotic diseases in Libya, in cooperation with the Libyan Ministry of Health and the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS).

Under this agreement, experts from WHO, the Ministry of Health, and the Istituto Superiore di Sanità in Rome will join forces to strengthen One Health in Libya. To strengthen Libya’s response to zoonotic infections, WHO will support efforts to improve disease surveillance and detection, foster collaboration among stakeholders, and upgrade the capacity of central and peripheral laboratories to diagnose zoonotic diseases.

WHO and partners will also develop simulation exercises to test Libya’s preparedness to detect and respond to arboviral (vector-borne) diseases such as dengue, yellow fever and chikungunya, and zoonotic diseases such as Ebola virus disease and avian influenza. This work aligns with existing national health policies, ensuring its longevity and effectiveness in

safeguarding health security and public health.

Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO Representative and Head of Mission in Libya, referred to WHO's partnership with the Ministry of Health and AICS as a groundbreaking development. "This collaboration will allow us to pave the way for the further strengthening of health security in Libya."

He said that the ultimate goal was to ensure that Libya's health system is able to prevent, detect and control health hazards from arboviral and zoonotic diseases, adding: "This solid 3-way partnership will improve coordination among the human, animal health and environment sectors within the framework of One Health, and will advance Libya's quest for a healthier, safer future for all Libyans."

"I am particularly glad to see the launch of this innovative Italian cooperation project with WHO and the Libyan Ministry of Health. The Istituto Superiore della Sanità is a jewel of the Italian health system, and I am delighted that it will be sharing its expertise with Libya, together with WHO," said Mr Gianluca Alberini, the Italian Ambassador to Libya.

"I am honoured to emphasize this innovative collaboration between WHO, the Ministry of Health and AICS," said Dr Azam Al-Gamodi, representative of the Libyan Ministry of Health. "This initiative reflects our unwavering commitment to building a healthier, more resilient society in Libya. With shared expertise, we can build a more resilient health system and ensure our communities are prepared to face health challenges with renewed determination and unity."

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1 The frequency and magnitude of arboviral and zoonotic disease outbreaks are increasing

globally, fuelled by the convergence of ecologic, economic and social factors. The One Health approach recognizes that the health of humans, domestic and wild animals, plants and the wider environment are closely linked and interdependent. By linking these different elements, One Health can help to address the full spectrum of disease control – from prevention to detection, preparedness, response and management – and contribute to global health security.

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